



Jacob meets WWE® Superstar Randy Orton

Thirteen-year-old Jacob Whitehouse from Bournemouth recently had his dearest wish to meet one of his favourite WWE Superstars granted by Starlight Children's Foundation, the UK's leading wish granting charity for children with serious and terminal illnesses.

In October 2009, Jacob was diagnosed with adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD), which is a severe life-limiting condition that majorly affects the tissues of the body. When Jacob was first diagnosed, he was given just two years to live but, with the help of his family and through his own determination, he has bravely fought the disease. He was the first child in the world to have stem cell treatment for ALD and is the only case where the spread of ALD has been halted. As a result of his condition, brave Jacob, who now uses a wheelchair, has to take a huge amount of medication and has become accustomed to lots of tests and hospital visits.

April, Jacob's mum, says, *"Jacob smiles all the time. He loves life and living on the edge. He has a cracking sense of humour and tries so hard!"* April heard about Starlight's wish granting programme and decided to refer Jacob for a wish. Knowing all the challenges that he faces, she thought he really deserved a special treat and Starlight's wish granters agreed! They asked Jacob to choose his favourite wish and Jacob asked to meet a WWE Superstar!

Jacob is a big WWE fan! His bedroom is absolutely covered in WWE posters and, according to his mum, he even has lots of WWE clothes and products! Jacob's two goals in life are to walk again and to become a WWE Superstar and, for a long time, it has been a dream of his to meet one of his favourite WWE Superstars.

Starlight arranged for Jacob and his parents April and Martin and his brother Samuel, aged 10, to have an incredible WWE experience in November. The family was invited to watch WWE Live in Birmingham's LG Arena, which was really exciting for Jacob and his brother Samuel, who is also a huge WWE fan. Their mum April managed to keep the trip a secret until the morning of the wish so it was a wonderful surprise for Jacob and Samuel!

They were even more amazed when they realised they were actually going to meet a real WWE Superstar! Jacob and his family were ushered through a curtain at the arena to find Randy Orton who was expecting them! Both boys were absolutely gob-smacked and Jacob couldn't stop smiling! Randy was lovely to them and paid them lots of attention. He was determined to make a fuss of Jacob and Samuel and answered all their questions and gave them lots of signed memorabilia as mementos of the wish.

Jacob also got to meet Justin, one of the WWE hosts, who he absolutely loves and this was the icing on the cake of a very special day. The family had been given incredible seats for the show and it was amazing for them to watch Orton in action from such a good seat!

After the wish, April said, *"We had an amazing time. The kids were so chuffed and amazed that it happened – thank you to Starlight for making this dream come true."*

Information

To refer a child for a wish or to make a donation, please go online at www.starlight.org.uk. For every £1 you donate, 92p goes towards helping Starlight's very ill children.

For more information, please contact Henny Vere Nicoll at henny@starlight.org.uk / 020 7262 2881 # 231.

Starlight grants once-in-a-lifetime wishes for seriously and terminally ill children, restoring the magic and fun of childhood and giving the whole family happy memories to share, whatever the future holds. Starlight also creates entertainment in every hospital and hospice throughout the UK.

Sick children go to Starlight parties, laugh their way through pantomimes, go out on Starlight Escapes, play games and watch films on the Starlight Fun Centre, and enjoy the toys and puzzles of the Starlight Distraction Box. Happy children respond better to treatment and Starlight helps children to forget about their illness and simply have a bit of fun.